

This Washington Post Fact Checker poll was conducted Nov. 29-Dec. 10, 2018 among a sample of 1,025 adults interviewed through the AmeriSpeak Panel, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. Interviews were conducted online and by landline and cellular phones. The margin of error for overall results is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

(See full methodological details at end)

\*= less than 0.5 percent

1. How closely do you follow the news about each of the following?

12/10/18 - Summary table

	-----Closely-----			-----Not as closely-----			No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not so	Not at all	opinion
a. Sports	44	16	29	56	28	28	*
b. Celebrities and pop culture	34	7	27	66	39	27	*
c. Politics and government	71	24	47	29	21	8	0
d. Science	50	12	39	49	35	15	*

The next series of question will be like a quiz. In each question you will be presented with two opposing statements, only one of which is true. Please choose which statement you believe is true. If you don't know the answer (just select/please say you are) "Unsure" rather than guessing.

[Note: The order of questions Q2A-Q2R was randomized, as well as the order true/false statements in each question. Respondents did not see bracketed text indicating which option was true or false. See end of document for sourcing.]

2A. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

In the last year, the company U.S. Steel announced plans to build more than six steel plants in the United States [FALSE]	12
In the last year, the company U.S. Steel announced plans to restart two blast furnaces at one plant in the United States [TRUE]	22
Unsure	65
No opinion	1

2B. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

Russia did not try to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election [FALSE]	15
Russia tried to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election [TRUE]	65
Unsure	19
No opinion	1

2C. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

The 2017 tax law passed by Congress was the largest tax cut in U.S. history [FALSE]	24
Congress has passed larger tax cuts than the 2017 tax cut [TRUE]	26
Unsure	49
No opinion	1

2D. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

The United States funds the majority of the budget for NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) [FALSE]	35
The United States funds a portion of the budget for NATO, but <u>not</u> the majority of it [TRUE]	27
Unsure	37
No opinion	1

2E. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

The policy of separating parents and children who crossed the border illegally earlier this year was required by long-standing U.S. laws [FALSE]	30
Long-standing U.S. laws did <u>not</u> require the separation of undocumented immigrant parents and children earlier this year [TRUE]	41
Unsure	27
No opinion	1

2F. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

Democratic senators have signed onto a bill promoting an "open borders" immigration policy [FALSE]	15
Democratic senators have <u>not</u> signed onto legislation supporting an "open borders" immigration policy [TRUE]	39
Unsure	44
No opinion	1

2G. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

Construction has begun on a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico [FALSE]	26
There is ongoing repair of fencing along the U.S. border with Mexico, but no wall is being built [TRUE]	51
Unsure	23
No opinion	1

2H. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

North Korea has done more to end its nuclear weapons program in the last six months than in the previous 25 years [FALSE]	34
North Korea has <u>not</u> done more to end its nuclear weapons program in the last six months than in the past 25 years [TRUE]	39
Unsure	26
No opinion	1

2I. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

The global temperature has been increasing in recent decades because of natural causes, not human activity [FALSE]	19
The global temperature has been increasing in recent decades mainly because of human activity [TRUE]	65
Unsure	15
No opinion	1

2J. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

There is evidence that millions of fraudulent votes were cast in the 2016 presidential election [FALSE]	25
There is no evidence of widespread voter fraud in the 2016 presidential election [TRUE]	44
Unsure	30
No opinion	1

2K. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

U.S. military spending is currently at a record high level [FALSE]	36
U.S. military spending has been higher previously than it is today [TRUE]	27
Unsure	36

No opinion	1
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2L. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

The U.S. unemployment rate is <u>not</u> at its lowest level in about 50 years [FALSE]	28
The U.S. unemployment rate is now at its lowest level in about 50 years [TRUE]	47
Unsure	24
No opinion	1

2M. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

In the United States, about 40 percent of guns are sold without background checks [FALSE]	30
In the United States, about 15 percent of guns are sold without background checks [TRUE]	30
Unsure	39
No opinion	1

2N. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

There are more people in prison for selling or possessing marijuana than for all violent crimes [FALSE]	46
There are more people in prison for violent crime than for selling or possessing marijuana [TRUE]	22
Unsure	30
No opinion	1

2O. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

The unemployment rate has fallen recently because more people are working 2 or 3 jobs [FALSE]	22
The unemployment rate has fallen recently because more people who have looked for work have found jobs [TRUE]	48
Unsure	30
No opinion	1

2P. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

About a decade ago, most Democratic senators voted <u>against</u> installing hundreds of miles of fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border [FALSE]	27
About a decade ago, most Democratic senators voted to <u>approve</u> installing hundreds of miles of fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border [TRUE]	30
Unsure	42
No opinion	1

2Q. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

Tax cuts passed under President George W. Bush were a major cause of the 2008 economic recession [FALSE]	27
Tax cuts passed under President George W. Bush were <u>not</u> a major cause of the 2008 economic recession [TRUE]	31
Unsure	42
No opinion	1

2R. Which of the following two statements is true?

12/10/18

American citizens living in any of the 50 states may be represented by a different number of U.S. senators, depending on population size [FALSE]	22
Americans citizens living in any of the 50 states are represented by two U.S. senators each [TRUE]	55
Unsure	22
No opinion	1

Summary table - Average response across 11 false claims by Trump (Q2A-K)

	Selected true response	Selected false response	Unsure
Total	41	25	34
Democrats	47	20	32
Republicans	34	35	30
Independents	41	23	34

Summary table - Average response across four false claims by Democrats (Q2M-0, Q2Q)

	Selected true response	Selected false response	Unsure
Total	33	31	35
Democrats	26	39	34
Republicans	45	22	33
Independents	33	29	37

3. How important is each of the following qualities of a presidential candidate to you personally?

12/10/18 - Summary table

	-----Important-----				-----Less important-----			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	Moderately	NET	Slightly	Not at all	op.
a. Honest	91	63	28	6	2	1	1	1
b. Strong	79	39	40	14	5	4	1	2

Trends:

a. Honest

	-----Important-----				-----Less important-----			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	Moderately	NET	Slightly	Not at all	op.
12/10/18	91	63	28	6	2	1	1	1
11/12/07*	90	69	21	7	2	1	1	1

\*Associated Press-Yahoo

b. Strong

	-----Important-----				-----Less important-----			No
	NET	Extremely	Very	Moderately	NET	Slightly	Not at all	op.
12/10/18	79	39	40	14	5	4	1	
11/12/07*	80	46	34	14	4	3	2	1

\*Associated Press-Yahoo

4. On another subject, do you or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president? Do you feel that way strongly, or somewhat?

	-----Approve-----			-----Disapprove-----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opin.
12/10/18	43	16	27	56	12	44	1

5. For each of the following, tell me if you think they regularly make misleading claims, or not? IF YES: Thinking about [ITEM], do you think misleading claims made by [ITEM] are usually (flat-out false), or are they usually (just exaggerations)?

12/10/18 - Summary table

	-----Yes, makes misleading claims-----					
	NET	Usually	Usually just	No	No, does	No
	Yes	flat-out false	exaggerations	op.	not	op
a. President Trump	71	49	22	1	27	2
b. Democrats in Congress	56	27	28	1	41	3
c. Republicans in Congress	67	31	36	1	30	3
d. The mainstream news media	62	29	33	*	36	2

6. When a [ITEM] says that Trump said something false, what do you tend to believe when it comes to that claim?

12/10/18 - Summary table

	That Trump made a false statement	That the [ITEM] is exaggerating what Trump said	That the [ITEM]'s claim is incorrect about Trump	No opinion
a. cable news report	51	32	13	4
b. cable news				

commentator	49	34	14	3
c. newspaper	52	33	11	3
d. fact-checking organization	64	23	9	4

7. Do you think it's (sometimes acceptable for political leaders to say things that are false in order to do what's right for the country), or is it (never acceptable for political leaders to say things that are false)?

	12/10/18
Sometimes acceptable to say things that are false	29
Never acceptable to say things that are false	70
No opinion	1

Question 8 held for release.

9. Which of the following is your main source for news about politics and government? Which of the following is your second most common source for news about politics and government?

12/10/18 -- Summary table

	Main source	Second source	NET Main or Second source
Fox News	18	11	29
CNN	15	11	25
MSNBC	5	5	10
Local TV	7	10	17
ABC	6	5	11
CBS	5	7	12
NBC	5	5	10
NPR	7	5	12
The New York Times	4	6	10
The Washington Post	2	2	4
Another newspaper	2	3	5
Local radio	4	6	10
National radio	2	3	4
Public television	4	5	9
Facebook	4	6	9
Other	10	9	15
No opinion	1	2	3

10. Have you ever watched a rally by President Trump on TV, online or in person, or haven't you watched a Trump rally?

	12/10/18
Have watched a Trump rally on TV, online or in person	45
Have not watched a Trump rally	48
Not sure	6
No opinion	*

11. Which of the following statements comes closest to your view?

	12/10/18
Democrats and Republicans are <u>more</u> likely to agree on basic facts than they were 10 years ago	7

Democrats and Republicans are <u>less</u> likely to agree on basic facts than they were 10 years ago	68
There is no difference how much they agree on basic facts compared with 10 years ago	23
No opinion	2

12. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as:

	A Democrat	A Republican	An Independent	Other	No opinion
12/10/18	34	26	33	5	2

\*\*\* END \*\*\*

#### METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS

This poll was sponsored and funded by The Washington Post. The web and phone poll is a random sample of adults in the United States, with interviews in English and Spanish.

This questionnaire was administered with the exact questions in the exact order as they appear in this document except where otherwise noted (i.e. the order of factual questions Q2A-Q2R was randomized). Demographic questions are not shown. If a question was asked of a reduced base of the sample, a parenthetical preceding the question identifies the group asked. Phrases surrounded by parentheses within questions indicate clauses that were randomly rotated for respondents.

Respondents were drawn from a stratified random sample of the AmeriSpeak Panel, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. The sample was stratified by age, race/ethnicity, gender and education. A total of 1,025 interviews were completed, including 968 self-administered over the internet and 57 administered by a professional interviewer over landline or cellular phone.

The AmeriSpeak panel was built through a nationally representative probability sample of U.S. households using mail, telephone and face-to-face recruitment methods. Panel members are permitted to complete surveys using an internet device or by phone. Additional technical details about AmeriSpeak survey methodology is available at [www.norc.org](http://www.norc.org).

This survey uses statistical weighting procedures to account for features of the AmeriSpeak panel sample design, efforts to recruit initially nonresponding households and to match population demographic benchmarks according to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample was weighted to adjust for nonresponse, as well as to match population benchmarks for age, gender, education, race/ethnicity and Census Division according to the Current Population Survey.

All error margins have been adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, which is 2.0 for the overall survey. The design effect is a factor representing the survey's deviation from a simple random sample and takes into account decreases in precision due to sample design and weighting procedures. Surveys that do not incorporate a design effect overstate their precision.

The Washington Post is a charter member of AAPOR's Transparency Initiative, which recognizes organizations that disclose key methodological details on the research they produce.

Contact [polls@washpost.com](mailto:polls@washpost.com) for further information about how The Washington Post conducts polls.

Key to true/false claims:



Question	Claim	Quote	Fact check citation (most from <a href="#">Fact Checker database</a> )
2A	In the last year, the company U.S. Steel announced plans to build more than six steel plants in the United States [False]	"U.S. Steel just announced they're expanding or building six new facilities." - President Trump, June 26, 2018	U.S. Steel has not announced the opening of six facilities, nor is there evidence that Trump had a phone call with the head of U.S. Steel. The company has only announced the reopening of two blast furnaces at a plant in Illinois and the upgrading of one plant in Indiana. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2B	Russia did <u>not</u> try to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election [False]	"My people came to me, Dan Coats came to me and some others, they said they think it's Russia. I have President Putin, he just said it's not Russia. I will say this: I don't see any reason why it would be." - President Trump, July 16, 2018	Overwhelming evidence shows that Russia orchestrated a campaign of cyberespionage and propaganda to interfere in the U.S. presidential election in 2016. The <a href="#">U.S. intelligence community</a> , the <a href="#">Department of Justice</a> , and the <a href="#">House</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a> intelligence committees have all arrived at this conclusion. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2C	The 2017 tax law passed by Congress was the largest tax cut in U.S. history [False]	"Republicans passed the biggest tax cut and reform in history with massive tax cuts for the middle class." - President Trump, Oct. 22, 2018	Trump's tax cut was nearly 0.9 percent of the gross domestic product, meaning it would be far smaller than President Ronald Reagan's tax cut in 1981, which was 2.89 percent of GDP. Trump's tax cut, if enacted in law, would be the eighth largest tax cut - and even smaller than two tax cuts passed under Barack Obama. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2D	The United States funds the majority of the budget for NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) [False]	"We were treated very unfairly. The United States was treated very, very unfairly because we're shouldering anywhere from 70 to 90 percent of the cost of NATO. That's not fair. It's not fair." - President Trump, July 30, 2018	The U.S. contributes about 22 percent to NATO's direct funding. It's more likely that Trump is talking about indirect funding. In that case, the U.S. spent about 67 percent of all defense spending by members of the alliance - but that is money countries spent on their own defense. The U.S. share is much higher because of its global responsibilities and higher GDP. The idea

			that the U.S. should be reimbursed or the protections of the alliance are one sided is very misguided. The only time NATO's Article 5 resolution has been enacted was to support the American led War on Terror. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2E	The policy of separating parents and children who crossed the border illegally earlier this year was required by long-standing U.S. laws [False]	"Obama separated... children from parents, as did Bush etc., because that is the policy and law. I tried to keep them together but the problem is, when you do that, vast numbers of additional people storm the Border [sic]." - President Trump, Nov. 25, 2018	The underlying laws were the same, but the Trump administration, as a policy decision called "zero tolerance," mandated anyone caught crossing the border illegally was to be criminally prosecuted. That meant children were separated and placed in the care of the Department of Health and Human Services. Obama did not have the same "zero tolerance" policy. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2F	Democratic senators have signed onto a bill promoting an "open borders" immigration policy [False]	"Every single Democrat in the U.S. Senate has signed up for the open borders, and it's a bill, it's called the 'open borders bill.'" - President Trump, Oct. 6, 2018	There is no bill known as the Open Borders Bill. Democrats generally do not advocate for illegal immigration and have repeatedly put forth immigration bills that both include a DACA solution and new border security measures.
2G	Construction has begun on a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico [False]	"We've started building the wall." - President Trump, April 3, 2018	The wall has not been started. Congress approved \$1.6 billion -- not twice as much -- for new fencing covering a portion of the border, not for Trump's promised wall. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2H	North Korea has done more to end its nuclear weapons program in the last six months than in the previous 25 years [False]	"North Korea is coming along very well. Relationships are very good. I think a lot of good things will happen. It's complicated. You know, we've done things in three or four months that nobody has done in 70 years. But I think North Korea is coming along very well." - President Trump, Oct. 13, 2018	Trump highlights the visible fruits of his talks with North Korea. But The Washington Post reported in June that U.S. intelligence officials, citing newly obtained evidence, have concluded that North Korea does not intend to fully surrender its nuclear stockpile, and instead is considering ways to conceal the number of weapons it has and secret production facilities. North Korea

			has also made more specific promises about denuclearization in 2005 than at the 2018 summit, which it did not live up to. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2I	The global temperature has been increasing in recent decades because of natural causes, not human activity [False]	"As to whether or not it's man-made and whether or not the effects that you're talking about are there, I don't see it." - President Trump, Nov. 27, 2018	According to a 2018 assessment from the <a href="#">U.S. Global Change Research Program</a> , "...the evidence of human-caused climate change is overwhelming and continues to strengthen, that the impacts of climate change are intensifying across the country, and that climate-related threats to Americans' physical, social, and economic well-being are rising."
2J	There is evidence that millions of fraudulent votes were cast in the 2016 presidential election [False]	"In addition to winning the Electoral College in a landslide, I won the popular vote if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally." - President Trump, Nov. 27, 2016	There no evidence of massive voter fraud in the 2016 election. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2K	U.S. military spending is currently at a record high level [False]	"We've achieved record funding for the military. Record by a lot; \$700 billion last year and \$716 billion this year." - President Trump, Oct. 23, 2018	When adjusted for inflation, many other years exceed the military budget passed under President Trump. The peak in recent years occurred in 2010, and more was also spent during World War II in inflation-adjusted outlays. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2L	The U.S. unemployment rate is now at its lowest level in about 50 years [TRUE]	"Unemployment recently fell to the lowest level in a half a century." - President Trump, July 31, 2018	The unemployment rate in June was 4 percent, up from 3.8 percent in May, but close to a roughly 50-year low point. The most recent rating is 3.7 percent, which is at least slightly lower than at any point since May 1969 (3.4 percent).
2M	In the United States, about 40 percent of guns are sold without background checks [False]	"We have to end the absurdity of the gun show loophole. Forty percent of the guns in this country are sold without any background checks." - Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Feb. 18, 2018	The most recent research indicates that 13 percent of guns - not 40 percent - are purchased without a background check. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2N	There are more people in prison for selling or possessing marijuana	"We need criminal justice reform in this country, but we need to	Nearly 44,700 people at the state level were serving a sentence of

	than for all violent crimes [False]	understand it's not a little slice. We need reform of the whole system. And it starts on the front end with the activities we criminalize, for example, low-level drug offenses – more people locked up for low-level offenses on marijuana than for all violent crimes in this country. That makes no sense at all.”– Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), June 13, 2018	one year or longer at the end of 2015 after being convicted of drug possession as their most serious offense, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. This includes not only marijuana but also heroin, cocaine and other illicit drugs. These 44,700 people represented 3.4 percent of the total population under the jurisdiction of state correctional authorities in 2015. Those convicted of violent crimes made up 54.5 percent of the total population, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics report. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
20	The unemployment rate has fallen recently because more people are working 2 or 3 jobs [False]	“Unemployment is low because everyone has two jobs. Unemployment is low because people are working 60, 70, 80 hours a week and can barely feed their family.” – Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, July 13, 2018	Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows that the percentage of people working two jobs has actually declined since the Great Recession. The July data shows that most people juggling two jobs – 58 percent – have a primary job and a part-time job...The average hours worked per week for private employees has remained steady at just under 35 hours for years. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2P	About a decade ago, most Democratic senators voted against installing hundreds of miles of fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border [False]	This specific false statement has not been claimed by a public official. White House budget director Mick Mulvaney has claimed Democrats voted for a border wall in 2006; they supported a fence, but not a wall.	The Secure Fence Act of 2006 authorized building a fence along about 700 miles of the border between the United States and Mexico. The fence several top Democrats voted for is not as substantial as the wall Trump is proposing. Trump himself called the 2006 fence a “nothing wall.” ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2Q	Tax cuts passed under President George W. Bush were a major cause of the 2008 economic recession [False]	“We had the worst financial crisis, the Great Recession, the worst since the 1930s. That was in large part because of tax policies that slashed taxes on the wealthy, failed to	The financial crisis of 2008 stemmed from a variety of complex factors, in particular the bubble in housing prices and the rise of exotic financial instruments.

		invest in the middle class, took their eyes off of Wall Street, and created a perfect storm." - Hillary Clinton, Sept. 26, 2016	Deregulation was certainly an important factor, but as the government commission concluded, the blame for that lies across administrations, not just in the last Republican one. The Bush tax cuts belong at the bottom of the list – if at all. ( <a href="#">Full story</a> )
2R	American citizens living in any of the 50 states may be represented by a different number of U.S. senators, depending on population size [False]	Not attributed to an individual (general civic knowledge question).	According to the <a href="#">U.S. Constitution</a> , "the Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State."

